

7 Men Attack Teenager in Russia for 'Lesbian' Appearance

By [Daniel Kozin](#)

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Yekaterina Lysikh, 18, was hospitalized with bruises and a concussion after a group of men attacked her over her “lesbian appearance.” **Telegram / cell_lupus**

A group of seven men attacked and beat an 18-year-old girl in St. Petersburg after insulting her over her “lesbian appearance,” local media reported earlier this week.

According to a study by the St. Petersburg-based Vykhod LGBT center, at least 149 people [suffered](#) homophobic attacks in the city in 2018, including 62 who were attacked on the street. Activists tie the violence to Russia’s 2013 law banning “gay propaganda among minors” and anti-LGBT rhetoric on state television.

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In the latest incident, Yekaterina Lysikh, 18, was attacked and beaten by a group of men who

had pursued her and her three friends into a café after harassing them on the street and trying to take their belongings.

“They started to insult us with harsh language because the girls with us have a non-typical appearance. They started to call us names, saying things like: ‘What’re you, lesbians?’,” the Bumaga news website [cited](#) Alina, one of the girls in the group, as saying.

A video [posted](#) by the Baza Telegram channel shows Lysikh running up to the group of men before being punched in the face and falling to the ground.

Lysikh was reportedly beaten after she stood up for one of her friends, who was punched by the men while trying to get out her pepper spray.

The victim filed a police report over the incident while in the hospital with a concussion and bruises, one of Lysikh’s friends — who asked to be called Rita Kell — told The Moscow Times.

On Thursday, Baza [reported](#) that police had detained and charged three males, aged 16 to 19, for attacking Lysikh.

“The detainees admitted that they didn’t like how Yekaterina had been holding hands with her friend,” Baza reported.

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пока под моим наблюдением pic.twitter.com/bJvD06zOgY

— кел (@cell___lupus) [December 10, 2019](#)

Since she first reported the attack on Twitter earlier this week, Kell says she has faced an avalanche of online criticism from men who have questioned the details of the story.

“People are saying the girls are themselves to blame... while others are saying that LGBT people and feminists should be beaten in this manner,” Kell said.

“The level of misogyny and lesbophobia in our country really makes us fear for our lives,” she added.

Meanwhile, Kell says she’s also received dozens of messages of support and donations from strangers online to help with Lysikh’s treatment.

According to Igor Kochetkov of the St. Petersburg-based LGBT-Network, the attack is indicative of prevalent attitudes toward LGBT people in Russia.

“Because they are an excluded group, some people in our society think they don’t have rights and comments that say the violence was justified are common,” he told The Moscow Times.

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